

LEADING PRAYERS

Firstly – Thank you for being willing to be part of our worship. Here are some helpful suggestions from ‘ New Patterns for Worship’ :

- * DO read the readings. Sometimes they might be used as a basis for prayer ('Father, thank you for . . . [what the verse says]; now please help us to . . .).
 - * DO discover the main theme of the service: is it based on the readings, the season or day? Ask the preacher if there is something specific to pray for if the prayers follow the preaching.
 - * DO find out about particular needs, who is ill or what church meetings or organizations need prayer this week. Watch the news, and vary the way in which international topics are prayed for; DON'T be out of date! But remember also the need for balance and breadth. As Note 15 to Common Worship Holy Communion says, 'the prayers of intercession are normally broadly based, expressing a concern for the whole of God's world and the ministry of the whole Church'.
 - * DO be aware of special events like baptisms or when there are large numbers of children or the Town Council present. DON'T focus on them (for example, a group of bereaved people the week after a funeral) in a way which will embarrass them.
 - * DO remember what was prayed for last week: should there be thanksgiving for prayer being answered? What other thanksgiving should there be? Again, as Note 15 says, 'intercession frequently arises out of thanksgiving'.
 - * DO decide what pattern of intercessions will be best, given what has been discovered and the pattern of the rest of the service.
 - * DON'T cram so much in that you have to rush.
 - * DON'T forget about the need for silences, and how and whether to introduce them.
 - * DON'T preach at people ('We pray we may all give generously at Gift Day').
 - * DO pray the intercessions out loud before the service, especially if they are homegrown.
- Watch the speed: will the congregation have time to pray, or be overwhelmed by the variety of images and topics? Will they know when to come in with their response? Is it short enough to remember?
- Look at the examples in this section.

Example:

Let us pray to the Lord.
For the peace that comes from God alone,
for the unity of all peoples,
and for our salvation,
Lord in your mercy.
Hear our prayer

For the Church of Christ, for *Rowan* our Archbishop, Trevor
our bishop, Gilbert our partner bishop in Madagascar [*for ...*]
and for the whole people of God,
Lord in your mercy.
Hear our prayer

For the nations of the world, [*for ...*,]
for Elizabeth our Queen and for all in authority,
Lord in your mercy.
Hear our prayer

For this village and community, [*for ...*,]
for our neighbours and our friends,
Lord in your mercy.
Hear our prayer

For the good earth which God has given us,
and for the wisdom and will to conserve it,
Lord in your mercy.
Hear our prayer

For the aged and infirm,
for the widowed and orphans,
for the sick and suffering,
[especially *for ...*] and for all in any need,
Lord in your mercy.
Hear our prayer

For the poor and the oppressed,
for the unemployed and the destitute,
for prisoners and captives,
and for all who remember and care for them,
Lord in your mercy.
Hear our prayer

For the dying, for those who mourn [*the death of ...*],
for the faithful whom we entrust to the Lord in hope,
as we look forward to the day when we share
the fullness of the resurrection,
Lord in your mercy.
Hear our prayer

Rejoicing in the communion of [... *and of all*] the saints,
let us commend ourselves, and one another,
and all our life, to God. Loving and Merciful Father
Amen.

OR:

Gracious God, fountain of all wisdom,
we pray for all Christian people;
for Archbishop Rowan, Bishop Trevor, for all Christian
leaders,
and for those who teach and guard the faith ...
May the word of Christ dwell richly in our hearts,
and knit us together in the bond of your love.

Hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

We pray for the leaders of the nations,
and for those in authority under them ...
Give them the gift of your wisdom,
and a right discernment in all things.

Hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

We pray for our *village and community*;
for those who live and work here,
and for those who visit this place ...
Speak your word of peace in our midst,
and help us to serve one another as Christ has served us.

Hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

We pray for those who do not believe,
and yet who long to know you, the very Word of life ...
Open their ears to hear your voice,
and open their hearts to the knowledge
of your love in Christ.

Hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

We pray for those bowed down with grief,
fear or sickness,
especially ...
May your living Word bring comfort and healing
to all those in need.

Hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

We give thanks for all those who have died in the
faith of Christ
and we rejoice with [*N and*] all your saints,
trusting in the promise of your word fulfilled.

Lord of life,
hear our prayer,
and make us one in heart and mind
to serve you with joy for ever.
Amen.